

III. REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1, 4, 9, 12, 17 and 20 have been amended and claims 3, 11 and 19 have been canceled. As a result, claims 1, 2, 4-10, 12-18 and 20-24 remain pending in this application. Applicants are not conceding in this application that those claims are not patentable over the art cited by the Office, as the present claim amendments and cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the Office. Applicants do not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections and reserve the right to present specific arguments regarding any rejected claims not specifically addressed. Further, Applicants reserve the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the original claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1,2, 5-10, 13-18, and 21-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Daniel *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,453,416 B1), hereafter “Daniel.” Claims 3, 4, 11, 12, 19 and 20 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant gratefully appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1, 2, 5-10, 13-18 AND 21-24 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

With regard to the 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejection over Daniel, the Office has objected to claims 3, 4, 11, 12, 19 and 20 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but states that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have rewritten claims 1, 9 and 17 to include the

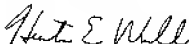
limitations of claims 3, 11 and 19, respectively. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw its rejection.

IV. CONCLUSION

In addition to the above arguments, Applicants submit that each of the pending claims is patentable for one or more additional unique features. To this extent, Applicants do not acquiesce to the Office's interpretation of the claimed subject matter or the references used in rejecting the claimed subject matter. Additionally, Applicants do not acquiesce to the Office's combinations and modifications of the various references or the motives cited for such combinations and modifications. These features and the appropriateness of the Office's combinations and modifications have not been separately addressed herein for brevity. However, Applicants reserve the right to present such arguments in a later response should one be necessary.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submits that all claims are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner require anything further to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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